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ABSTRACT

Cultural dependency has become a serious international issue over the past two decades, especially as it relates to the news media. If charges that the Latin American media are subservient to foreign interests have any truth, then the content of their media should closely resemble that of the foreign wires to which they subscribe. The news can be separated into two components: the topics that represent the objective facts of the stories, and the themes that represent subjective overtones or labels closer to opinion than fact. Given this distinction, one could expect an independent newspaper with access to divergent sources to reject themes in wire copy more often than a dependent newspaper. From neither dependent nor independent newspapers could one expect a rejection of wire topics, which are, after all, the substance of the news. A large-scale content analysis of the news wires and foreign news in seven Latin American newspapers, sampled papers from April through June, 1979, to determine whether cultural dependency may be indirectly measured by comparing topical and thematic agendas between the wires and the newspapers. Though all the sampled papers showed topical dependence, the two Mexican papers were thematically independent, the two Brazilian papers thematically dependent, and the three Argentine papers a combination of the two stances. The findings suggest that the more news sources a newspaper attributes, the more thematically independent its foreign news will be. (Author/HOD)

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International Communication Division

A TEST OF THE CULTURAL DEPENDENCY THEORY IN SEVEN LATIN AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

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A Test of the Cultural Dependency Theory
in Seven Latin American Newspapers

Cultural dependence has become a serious international issue over the past two decades, partly because of the forum that UNESCO has provided the increasing number of proponents of a 'balanced flow' of international news. The so-called UNESCO debate over a new world information order has been admirably chronicled by Rosemary Righter, who presents the case for both sides; the traditional 'free flow' advocates, represented by the developed nations, and the 'balanced flow' advocates, represented by most Communist bloc countries in alliance with the Non-aligned countries of the Third World.[1] Recently, the MacBride Commission has come out in favor of those advocating a more balanced flow of international news:

> The media in developing countries take a high percentage of their cultural and entertainment content from a few developed countries.... Local imitations of imported culture and entertainment do not improve the situation; they too lead to the imposition of external values. The connecting thread in this process is a commercial approach to culture, operating to the detriment of true values. Transnational companies are playing an ever more active role in the worldwide provision of communication infrastructures, news circulation, cultural products, (etc.). Although their role in extending facilities for cultural development has been considerable, they also promote alien attitudes across cultural frontiers. [2]

Whatever one might say against this notion of an alien culture contaminating pristine, indigenous cultures, there have been several Western sympathizers with the theory of cultural dominance and dependence: Mort Rosenblum states that the Western monopoly on international news amounts to cultural domination, while Anthony Smith implies that the news monopoly confirms already dependent countries in an even worse state of dependence.[3] Perhaps the most vocal proponents of this idea are the Latin American 'dependencia' theorists: Juan Somavia agrees with the MacBride report that the commercial nature of international news distorts it for receiving markets; Eleazar Diaz Rangel relates cultural to economic dependence in Latin America; and Luis Ramiro Beltrán presents probably the most ideological statement of the dependencia theory in this regard. He maintains that "cultural imperialism through communication is not an occasional and fortuitous event.... it is a vital process for 'imperial' countries to secure and maintain economic

domination and political hegemony over others."[4] That this is not merely a leftist sentiment in Latin America is clear from a 1969 statement by the bishops of Peru:

> Like other nations in the Third World, we are the victims of systems that exploit our natural resources, control our political decisions, and impose on us the cultural domination of their values and consumer civilization.... News agencies and the communications media, which are controlled by the powerful, do not express the rights of the weak; they distort reality by filtering information in accord with vested interests. 5

The Latin American case may indeed not be unique to the Third World, but its early independence from direct colonial rule and other factors certainly make it a special case worth a separate study. Since the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, the Latin American republics have complained of the political and economic negemony which foreign powers, especially Great Britain and the United States, have exercised there. The result of this long-standing complaint has been to lay the blame for most of Latin America's political, economic, and cultural problems on the doorstep of the larger powers. The problems of the mass media are no different in this respect.

John Gerassi, who sympathizes with Latin America, nonetheless characterized it as follows: "Latin America's social and economic structure is decadent, corrupt, immoral and generally unsalvageable."[6] Some prominent Latin Americans have agreed with this harsh opinion, among them the Mexican novelist, Carlos Fuentes:

> In our day, a true revolution in Latin America is equivalent to a war of independence.... Sacrificing democracy through revolution? Not if there has never been a democracy in Latin America.... Sacrificing freedom of the press? Not if there is no such thing in Latin America; there is an anti-national, corrupt press, at the service of the interests of feudalism and the most powerful nation at hand. 7

Gerassi contends that the Latin American press, "from which most U.S. correspondents copy the information they send us to read at home, is usually a party press --an organ of political parties that, in turn, represent the oligarchies."[8] Whatever the extent of corruption in the Latin American press, Reyes Matta lays the blame, not so much on the ruling oiligarchies, as on the wire agencies that feed the media:

> There is a bedazzlement which conditions the practice of editors and wire-men. The old inertia makes them follow certain editorial patterns. The persistence of the stereotyped behavior confirms the news agencies in their belief that 'this is what the media want.' So the vicious circle of domination perpetuates itself, condemning Latin America to ignorance of its own affairs and cutting it off from the profound changes that are unfolding in the Third World. 9

This 'bedazzlement' is more conventionally referred to as modeling by the Latin American elites on foreign models.[10] If charges that the Latin American media are subservient to foreign interests have any truth, then the content of their media should closely resemble that of the foreign wires they subscribe to. And if we understand the process of cultural domination to be analogous to agenda-setting, then modeling, or dependence, can be shown by means of comparative content analysis: the more dependent a receiver medium, the more its agenda of topics and themes will resemble the agenda of the foreign wires. The reasons for suspecting the wires of being strong agenda-setters are both historical and structural.

The major wires have been linked with theories of imperialism for very good reason. In 1869 Reuter's of Britain, Havas of France, and Wolff of Germany, the three major world news agencies, agreed by the Alliance Treaty to divide up the world into zones of news monopoly for each, the divisions being based on traditional cultural ties or colonial markets. Havas received a monopoly over Latin America, but the mavericks in the system, the United States' AP and UP, took over control of the Latin American market during World War I.[11] Today the all-pervasive influence of AP and UPI in Latin America is resented in a way that the former monopolist, Havas, never was. Some quantitative studies have been done to test the extent of the effects of this near-monopoly by the U.S. agencies, but none so far have been thoroughly convincing. Beltran and Fox conclude, based on the extent of U.S. penetration of Latin American news media, that the U.S. wire services "systematically distort, through selection and manipulation, the image of the world outside presented to the Latin American through their papers."[12] But the extent of a source's pervasion cannot be equated with its effect on receivers: in other words, there must be some evidence to substantiate that the receivers actually do accept the wires' agenda, and

do not modify the agenda or simply ignore it. Some content analysis studies have traced wire stories to the media, and concluded that the wires present inadequate coverage, namely studies by Bonilla de Ramos (1977) and Reyes Matta (1974).[13] But both rely on coverage of a single event, hardly a proper measure of ~~general~~ consistently inadequate coverage on the part of the wires. Clearly a content analysis of wires and newspapers over time is required for a proper comparison.

Given such data and the foregoing charges, we may make certain reasonable assumptions on what we would expect of agenda-setting in the Latin American media. Let us first separate the news into two components: the topics, which represent the ~~subjective~~ objective facts of the stories, and the themes, which represent subjective overtones or labels closer to opinion than fact. Given this admittedly arbitrary distinction, we could expect an independent newspaper with access to divergent sources to reject ~~these~~ themes in wire copy more often than a 'dependent' newspaper, that is, one which had access only to the major wires or which had modeled its agenda on the wire agenda, for whatever reasons of ideology, prestige, or necessity. ~~For~~ From neither dependent ~~or~~ nor independent papers would we expect a rejection of wire topics, which after all are the substance of the news. Here we would expect that the structural factors of news values and traditional content would have most nearly approximated what Jeremy Tunstall has called the common international agenda.[14] Theoretically, at least, cultural values would clash more on the level of themes than topics, which are governed by more mundane newsroom values. This is not to say that a newspaper will not present a unique blend of topics with respect to local news or non-news events and discussions: indeed, this would be precisely the place where indigenous cultural values would be most logical and appropriate. It is only in foreign news that we expect a common international agenda, due to the preponderance of the major news wires. Whether topical or thematic agendas are rejected or accepted is at the heart of news-cultural dependence. If both wire topics and themes are accepted by a medium, then there is a case for cultural dependence; if themes rejected, then a case for cultural independence. In both cases we must try to correlate the degree of independence with the number of sources used. Presumably, the more sources used, the more independent.

II. Method and Hypotheses

The content analysis on which this study is based was requested by UNESCO, designed by the IAMCR in England, and funded in part by the USICA. The original study, carried out in 1979, involved over twenty countries. The United States team undertook to code not only the designated U.S. newspapers, but also the four major wires (AP, UPI, AFP of France, and Reuters) and the media of 16 countries not otherwise participating in the study, including the USSR, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and others.

Content analysis of national media was limited to a sample of days over a three-month period in 1979, from April through June; the wires were coded only for the continuous week of April 22-28, 1979. Items of foreign news alone were coded, the main categories of coding being source of news, topics, themes, and actors. The details of this elaborate content analysis, along with figures on intercoder reliability, may be found in a number of papers from the UNC-CH school of Journalism, as well as the full UNESCO report on the world-wide content analysis.[15] The 47 topics and 33 themes of the original codesheet were collapsed according to the principles laid out in earlier studies by McCombs and Shaw (1972) and Gormley (1977).[16] These collapsed categories are presented in Table 1:

Table 1 about here

The topical or thematic agenda is defined as the frequency of topics and themes for all coded foreign news items; as usual for studies of this nature, agendas are compared using the Spearman's correlation, which matches the range of different frequencies of one agenda (say, the wire) with that of another agenda (say, that of the receiving newspaper). In all cases a p level $\leq .05$ was considered an indication of significant fit, i.e. similar agendas. In some cases, agendas were compared where no agenda-setting could be inferred, e.g. when the newspaper did not give the sources for its news, as was often the case for Brazilian and Argentine media. But for the two Mexican newspapers coded sourcing was sufficient to allow conclusions on the extent of agenda-setting by U.S. and other wires.

TABLE 1: Collapsed categories for topics and themes --

Topics:

1) International politics
2) Domestic politics
3) Military and defense
4) Economic matters
5) International aid
6) Social services
7) Crime and legal
8) Cultural/scientific
9) Sports
10) Human interest
11) Disasters
12) Other topics

Themes:

1) East-West concerns
2) Racial/ethnic strife
3) Political/economic independence
4) Foreign aid and economic development issues
5) Energy/oil/pollution
6) Rights and freedoms
7) Violence/subversion
8) Economic/social injustice
9) Corruption
10) Ideological differences, labels

Notes on collapsing: For topics, the collapsed categories corresponded, in most cases, to broad category groupings in original codebook (see Appendix). For themes, the collapsed categories were devised by this author. The original theme 11, population control, was dropped because of miniscule frequencies in preliminary runs. The other themes were grouped with attention to logical affinity. Two possible sources of internal weakness are the inclusion of theme 02 (espionage) with East-West concerns, and the yoking of themes 12 and 13 into one group. On the first point there is a defense: an exchange of US and USSR spies was the dominant espionage story of the April-June, 1979, period. On the second point, there is only this author's opinion that the two original themes shared the common denominator of scarcity of resources and their abuse.

The Latin American newspapers coded were: Excelsior and El Universal, two leading dailies in Mexico City; O Estado de São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro's Jornal do Brasil, the leading dailies of Brazil's two major cities; and Crónica, Clarín, and La Opinión, all dailies in Buenos Aires. As of 1979, Crónica had the largest circulation of any paper in Argentina. Both Crónica and Clarín follow the tabloid format; all other sampled papers followed more reserved newspaper style.[17] For the sake of economy of words, these papers will be referred to as the Mexican, Brazilian, and Argentine media, respectively; but we must not generalize findings beyond the capital cities where they have the bulk of their circulation. For some correlations, the papers' frequencies have been collapsed into aggregates that might be considered the 'capital city' agenda (in Brazil's case 'leading cities' agenda), but this again is only a concession to the requirements of statistical analysis, and is thus in no way meant to apply as a generalization beyond the papers aggregated; but since these are leading Latin American dailies, their examples must be considered seriously in any study of 'dependencia'.

With regard to news sources, the lynchpin of agenda-setting, only the two Mexican newspapers gave attribution to nearly all their stories; as Table 2 shows, the Argentine media give some attribution to the four major wires, but almost none to the commentary of their own journalists, whereas the Brazilian papers credit their own correspondents, but not the major wires:

Table 2 about here

Because of erratic attribution of sources and the problem of low numbers of cases for some data manipulations, the statistical analysis was kept simple. To avoid low n's of cases, aggregation had to be used in two ways: aggregation of the sampled papers into an artificial 'country' aggregate, and aggregation of the several types of foreign news (news items sourced to wires, commentary by local correspondents, editorials) into the aggregate of 'foreign news'. Based on this strategy of data analysis, the research questions concerning news dependence were operationalized as follows:

1) All four wires will have similar topical and thematic agendas

TABLE 2: Attributed sources in Latin American newspapers coded --

Mexico:	El Universal	Excelsior
Home country agency	2	1
UPI	225	0
AP	1	239
AFP	162	181
TASS	0	3
Other agency	4	9
Own correspondent	59	127
Other medium,home	2	7
Other medium,foreign	0	15
Other source	56	84
No source	110	226
Multiple sources	3	4
EFE-Spain	166	115
NASA-Italy	31	62
NYT Service	0	69
WashPost-LA Times	0	24
DPA-Germany	1	26
TIP	1	0
NEA-US	1	0
ACI	1	0
PrensaLatina-Cuba	0	30
IPS	0	16
Latin-Reuter	0	54
Latin	0	35
WashingtonStar	0	2
	826(total cases)	1321

Argentina:	Clarin	La Opinion	Cronica
Reuters	0	1	0
UPI	15	19	66
AP	27	0	54
AFP	41	28	86
Other agency	37	0	23
Own correspondent	1	6	6
Other medium,home	0	0	1
Other med.,foreign	9	2	0
Other	126	0	20
No source	165	542	67
Multiple sources	49	0	5
EFE-Spain	17	6	88
NASA-Italy	0	14	51
TAP-Tunisia	1	0	0
DPA-Germany	0	0	34
Latin-Reuter	0	21	0
Latin	0	8	0
	488	648	501

TABLE 2 continued:

Brazil:	O Estado de Sao Paulo	Jornal do Brasil
UPI	8	0
AFP	0	1
TASS	1	1
Own correspondent	61	49
Other med.,foreign	12	14
Other	85	111
No Source	349	393
Multiple sources	17	1
NYT service	1	0
	535	570

Notes: Only Source1 is given for each paper.

Reuters and LATIN-Reuters are, of course, the same agency, but the coders were given both options, because papers did not code the agency always in the proper manner: Reuters-Latin. Multiple sources was an option in cases of more than one agency, but in some cases coders chose to code the first agency under its own name, then use the "multiple sources" code in the Source2 position. Only the Mexican papers and Estado offered this interesting problem of multiple coding.

2) All the Latin American newspapers will accept the topical agenda of the wires (to be tested by means of AP and AFP, known to be used by all papers)

3) If a newspaper rejects the thematic agenda of a wire service, it will also prove to attribute more sources than papers which do not reject the the wire agenda.

Based on charges of a Western wire agenda and Latin American dependence on that agenda, these are the most reasonable hypotheses. The third represents the criteria for cultural independence implicit in the works of two prominent libertarians: John Stuart Mills' On Liberty and Walter Lippmann's Public Opinion. According to them, access to divergent sources increases the independence of the person from the power of any one source of opinion. Of course, it is possible that a history of exposure to one source of opinion (e.g. AP or UPI) could have conditioned a receiver against new sources of information, but this possibility must be considered unlikely in a climate of opinion so favorable to more cultural independence as that which prevails in Latin America.

To test these hypotheses required several examinations of the data which cannot be presented here. The data presented had to conform to the special shortcomings in source attribution in each of the three countries, so the strategy followed was this:

1) an examination of each of Mexico's sampled newspapers separately for agenda-setting. Presumably, the own-correspondent comments would tend to be more independent than copy sourced to a wire; and in either case, the own-correspondent copy would tend to reject themes from the wires.

2) a table to show correlations of newspapers intra-country, for the sake of collapsing the individual papers into a country aggregate

3) an examination of the collapsed Brazilian and Argentine papers (compared with the AP and AFP agendas) with respect to their peculiarities; that is, for Brazil, the own-correspondent and no-sourced copy were examined separately, and for Argentina, wire-attributed copy and no-sourced copy (there being no own-correspondent copy)

4) a full table comparing the collapsed 'foreign news' agenda of each paper with the agenda of each of the four wires, even though some of the papers (e.g. the Argentine) may not have subscribed to all four wires.

After the final table, a rough calculation will be made correlating degree of independence with number of sources attributed. This will be done to show whether divergent news sources make a newspaper less dependent, and provide a basis for the interpretations and conclusions to follow.

III. Data Analysis

Mexico

As is clear from Table 2, the Mexican newspapers provided the best data for testing the agenda-setting theory cross-culturally, since they usually attribute the source of the news item and also feature bylined commentary. Adapting the agenda-setting model to the wire-newspaper relationship, we can posit the following line of diminishing source influence:

Wire agenda → wire-attributed copy → own-correspondent copy → editorials

The number of editorials was insufficient for all papers to run a Spearman's correlation. And only for the two Mexican papers was it possible to test the first part of this agenda-setting line. As predicted, Table 3 shows that the two papers accept the topical agenda of the U.S. wire that each took (UPI for El Universal, AP for Excelsior):

TAble 3 about here

If the mix of topics does carry cultural values of the wires, as some critics contend, than even topcial agenda-setting (indicated here) means a degree of cultural dependence; but it seems more reasonable to expect a different mix of topics for local news and local commentary, than for foreign news. The issue here is cultural dependence on foreign news sources, and that is better represented by the coding category of themes. Here both Mexican newspapers rejected the wire agenda and presumably offered one of their own:

Table 4 about here

Notice first that the two U.S. wires have similar thematic agendas, as do the two Mexican papers (as represented by the intra-country own-correspondent and wire-attributed correlations at the bottom). Though El Universal accepts the UPI thematic 'line' in its UPI-attributed copy, neither paper accepts the wire agenda in its own-correspondent copy, a clear sign of cultural independence.

TABLE 3: Topical agenda-setting in Mexican papers (Spearman's correlations)

El Universal--

UPI with UPI-run copy: 0.7832 (p = .001)
UPI with Own-correspondent copy:
0.7622 (p = .002)
UPI-run copy with own-correspondent copy:
0.8252 (p = .001)

Excelsior--

AP with AP-run copy: 0.7553 (p = .002)
AP with Own-correspondent copy:
0.8869 (p = .001)
AP-run copy with own-correspondent copy:
0.8369 (p = .001)

Inter-wires:

UPI with AP: 0.9842 (p = .001)

Between wire-attributed copy:

UPI-run copy with AP-run copy:
0.8084 (p = .001)

Between Own-correspondent copy for the two papers:

Universal own-correspondent copy with
Excelsior own-correspondent copy:
0.8925 (p = .001)

TABLE 4: Thematic agenda-setting in Mexican papers (Spearman's correlations)

El Universal:			
	UPI with UPI-run:	0.6189	(p = .028)
	UPI with Own-correspondent:	-0.1250	(p = NS)*
	UPI-run with Own-correspondent:	0.1083	(p = NS)
Excelsior:			
	AP with AP-run copy:	0.3210	(p = NS)
	AP with Own-correspondent:	0.3242	(p = NS)
	AP-run with Own-correspondent:	0.1048	(p = NS)
Interwires:			
	AP with UPI:	0.8842	(p = .001)
Between wire-attributed copy:			
	UPI-run with AP-run:	0.6259	(p = .026)
Between own-correspondent copy of two Mexican papers:			
	El Universal own-correspondent copy with Excelsior own-correspondent:	0.6333	(p = .025)

* NS = non significant

Brazil

To look at the smaller categories of foreign news, it was necessary in the cases of Brazil and Argentina to aggregate the individual papers. As Table 5 shows, this is warranted for the two Brazilian newspapers' foreign news, but not for the three Argentine. Since a later table examines each paper separately against each wire, this does not present an insurmountable problem in either case. For descriptive purposes it is important to see what trends might be evinced in the Brazilian and Argentine media that the 'foreign news' aggregate would not disclose,

Table 5 about here

For Brazil, two wires --AP-to-Rio and AFP-- were compared with the own-correspondent copy (collapsed for both papers) and the no-sourced copy, likewise collapsed. This was done to see whether the no-sourced copy, probably representing a majority of the wire stories, would not correlate differently from the own-correspondent copy, which would presumably, if independent, have a different agenda from either of the two test wires. Table 6 shows to the contrary:

Table 6 about here

For topics and themes, for own-correspondent and no-sourced copy, the two Brazilian papers proved to have similar agendas to both the AP and AFP agendas, which indicates cultural dependence on the wire agenda, at least for foreign news. None of this analysis is meant to insinuate that any of these papers may not pursue an independent editorial line domestically; in fact for Brazil's two papers sampled here, as well as Mexico's Excelsior and Argentina's Clarín and La Opinión, there is ample evidence that these papers often criticize their governments.[18] But for papers not of the stature or power of O Estado or the Jornal do Brasil, it is the consensus that domestic censorship takes its toll on independent thought: Alberto Maldonado considers Brazil's domestic censorship "ironclad', but sarcastically adds that neither AP, UPI, nor the Western European agencies have had any problem distributing their news in Brazil, which obeys the principle of the free flow of information.[19] Clearly we must distinguish between domestic news coverage, where several of these papers are independent, and foreign news reporting, where other factors operate.

TABLE 5: Spearman's correlations for the sake of aggregation

		Topics:	Themes:
Brazil:	O Estado de Sao Paulo with Jornal do Brasil --	0.9371 (p=.001)	0.6636 (p=.018)
Argentina:	Clarin with La Opinion --	0.6865 (p=.007)	0.3951 (p=NS)
	Clarin with Cronica --	0.6175 (p=.016)	0.3395 (p=NS)
	La Opinion with Cronica --	0.3503 (p=NS)	0.3816 (p=NS)
Mexico:	El Universal with Excelsior --	0.9231 (p=.001)	0.6037 (p=.032)

TABLE 6: Agenda-setting for aggregated Brazilian newspapers:
(test wires -- AP-to-Rio and AFP-Latin)

		Topics:	Themes:
Interwire:	AP with AFP --	0.9091 (p=.001)	0.7477 (p=.006)
AP:	AP with own-correspondent copy--	0.6620 (p=.010)	0.6483 (p=.021)
	AP with no-source copy--	0.8531 (p=.001)	0.7073 (p=.011)
AFP:	AFP with own-corr copy--	0.6550 (p=.010)	0.6646 (p=.018)
	AFP with no-source copy--	0.8741 (p=.001)	0.6991 (p=.012)
Domestic:			
	Own-correspondent copy with no-source copy --	0.8581 (p=.001)	0.7615 (p=.005)

Note: See Table 2 (Sources of foreign news) for low n's of own-correspondent copy in Brazilian papers. Also, since neither Brazilian paper attributes wire use openly, agenda-setting cannot be strictly followed; this is agenda-holding. Still, the probable source for much of the no-sourced copy must be one of the major wires, and these high correlations seem to bear that out.

Argentina

In the Brazilian case it was possible to infer cultural independence from the bylined, own-correspondent alone, without the desirable link of wire-attributed copy to show the connection with wire agendas; but in the Argentine cases, even this means of inference is lacking. Though there is some wire-attribution, there are almost no own-correspondent stories and enough no-sourced stories to make us suspicious of the consistency with which the three papers attribute foreign news items. Another problem is the lack of warrant to aggregate the three papers, as shown by nonsignificant Spearman's correlations in Table 5. Given these drawbacks, Table 7 still shows some interesting agenda comparisons for AP-to-Buenos-Aires and AFP, the two test wires:

Table 7 about here

Whereas AP themes do not correlate with the aggregated thematic agenda for AP-attributed copy, AFP themes do, in the corresponding case. And whatever the no-sourced copy represents, it has more in common with the AP, than with the AFP thematic agenda. So there is tentative evidence that the Argentine papers do exhibit some cultural independence, albeit in a very selective way. This will become clearer in the paper-by-paper agenda comparisons.

Agenda-holding for all papers and wires

The similarity of topical and thematic agendas across the four wires has been indicated in previous correlations. This would lead us to believe that a newspaper which accepted AP and AFP themes would accept those of UPI and Reuters as well; but since we do not know whether each of these papers takes all four wire services (Table 2 helps in some, not all cases), then we are speaking here not of acceptance so much as similarity of wire and paper agendas. This is called agenda-holding here to distinguish it from the agenda-setting we found did not hold in the Mexican case. The results of comparing, then, every paper's collapsed 'foreign news' agenda with every wire's agenda are given in Table 8:

Table 8 about here

TABLE 7: Agenda-setting for aggregated Argentine newspapers*
(test cases --AP-to-Buenos Aires and AFP-Latin)

		Topics:	Themes:
Interwire:	AP-Argentina with AFP--	0.9441 (p=.001)	0.8303 (p=.001)
AP:	AP with AP-run copy--	0.5105 (p=.045)	0.2580 (p=NS)
	AP with no-sourced copy--	0.7483 (p=.003)	0.6687 (p=.017)
AFP:	AFP with AFP-run copy--	0.8652 (p=.001)	0.7561 (p=.006)
	AFP with no-sourced copy--	0.7692 (p=.002)	0.4559 (p=NS)
Domestic correlations:			
	AP-run copy with no-sourced--	0.4126 (p=NS)	0.5619 (p=.045)
	AFP-run copy with no-sourced--	0.6900 (p=.007)	0.6269 (p=.026)

* Table 6 indicates that the Argentine papers cannot be properly aggregated into a convenient "Argentine" agenda, so these correlations are presented for heuristic purposes only. The paper-by-paper agenda-holding to follow will give more exact data.

8

TABLE 8: Agenda-holding for all four wires and the eight newspapers (General foreign news)

Each paper with the four pertinent wire services:

	Topics	Themes
Mexico:		
El Universal with AP-to-Mexico	0.7180 p=.004	0.2970 NS
AFP	0.7902 p=.001	0.2996 NS
UPI	0.7483 p=.003	0.1281 NS
Reuters	0.6760 p=.008	-0.1515 NS
Excelsior with AP-to-Mexico	0.6095 p=.004	0.5000 NS
AFP	0.6573 p=.010	0.2446 NS
UPI	0.6434 p=.012	0.3252 NS
Reuters	0.4098 NS	0.4817 NS
Brazil:		
O Estado de Sao Paulo with AP-Rio	0.7483 p=.003	0.6942 p=.013
AFP	0.7692 p=.002	0.8838 p=.001
UPI	0.7413 p=.003	0.8160 p=.002
Reuters	0.7040 p=.005	0.4634 NS
Jornal do Brasil with AP-Rio	0.6713 p=.008	0.6646 p=.018
AFP	0.7273 p=.004	0.6220 p=.027
UPI	0.7063 p=.005	0.6116 p=.030
Reuters	0.6550 p=.010	0.0 NS

(TABLE 12 continued)

Argentina:	Topics	Themes
Clarin with AP-Buenos Aires	0.5954 p=.021	0.7234 p=.009
AFP	0.7776 p=.001	0.8232 p=.002
UPI	0.7461 p=.003	0.6300 p=.025
Reuters	0.5825 p=.023	0.4377 NS
La Opinion with AP-Buenos Aires	0.7972 p=.001	0.6121 p=.030
AFP	0.7762 p=.001	0.4255 NS
UPI	0.7343 p=.003	0.7195 p=.009
Reuters	0.7531 p=.002	0.7455 p=.007
Cronica with AP-Buenos Aires	0.4308 NS	0.1539 NS
AFP	0.5709 p=.026	0.3797 NS
UPI	0.6165 p=.016	0.4489 NS
Reuters	0.4140 NS	-0.0862 NS

Interwires (All Spearman's for topics significant to the p=.001 level, for all permutations.)
Also, the three AP services intercorrelate highly as to themes (p=.001 for all).

Other thematic intercorrelations:

	AP-Mex	AP-Rio	AP-Arg	/ UPI	AFP
UPI	0.8842 p=.001	0.8828 p=.002	0.9025 p=.001		
AFP	0.7964 p=.003	0.7195 p=.009	0.8268 p=.002		
Reuters	0.4909 NS	0.5410 NS	0.5515 p=.049	0.4939 NS	0.2310 NS

As the inter-wire correlations show, Reuter's proved to be the only maverick: with every wire service except AP-Argentina it shows a nonsignificant thematic correlation. Clearly Reuters is sending across a different mix of themes than the other three wires. So it is doubly interesting to see that only La Opinion of Argentina has a thematic agenda similar to that of Reuters; and compared with Clarín, La Opinion emerges as the more Anglophile of the two, whereas Clarín could be considered more Francophile, based on these data. Crónica's independence from wire themes would seem unexplainable, were it not for the fact that Crónica is a sensational tabloid which seems to slant its news, foreign and domestic, accordingly.

The Mexican papers run true to form, rejecting all wire themes, just as the two Brazilian papers have thematic agendas similar to everywhere except the maverick Reuters. This would lead us to believe that the earlier tables with their aggregations were not far off the mark in their pictures of cultural dependence or independence. Consequently, based on these data, we can rank Mexico's elite papers as the most culturally independent of wire influence, Argentina's papers as next most independent, and Brazil's two elite papers as most culturally dependent, in the area of foreign news.

IV. Interpretations and conclusions

The three hypotheses fared as follows:

1) "All four wires will have similar topical and thematic agendas." This was not borne out, even though it was true that AP, UPI, and AFP all had similar agendas. The presence of Reuters as a thematic anomaly in the supposedly monolithic "Big Four" world wires was a surprise, and should be investigated further. If divergent voices are the desideratum in the Latin American news system, then a turn to Reuters might be a step in the right direction.

2) "All the Latin American newspapers will accept the topical agenda of the tested wires." Consulting Table 8, we see that this hypothesis is also not strictly borne out, though most newspapers do show remarkable topical similarity to the wire agenda. Both Excelsior and Crónica have agendas dissimlar to Reuters', and Crónica even shows topical dissimilarity to the AP service going to Buenos Aires. The reasons for these anomalies are not apparent from the data, and deserve further investigation.

3)"If a newspaper rejects the thematic agenda of a wire service, it will also prove to attribute more sources than papers which do not reject the wire agenda." This can be tested by the following strategem. The number of divergent sources used can be estimated from Table 2 if we use the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{\# of stories attributed to a source}}{\text{total \# of stories}} \times \text{\# of separate sources used}$$

From this equation the no-sourced stories are absent, because they represent either lack of sources or disinclination to name them. Using this formula, the coefficient of source diversity can be specified for each paper:

Excelsior (Mex.)	16.5	(1) rank
El Universal (Mex.)	13.0	(2)
Cronica (Arg.)	8.7	(3)
Clarin (Arg.)	7.3	(4)
O Estado (Bra.)	2.4	(5)
Jornal (Bra.)	1.9	(6)
La Opinion (Arg.)	1.8	(7)

This rank order roughly corresponds with the order derived from Table 8: Mexico most

independent, Argentina next, and Brazil least independent. The exceptions are the Argentine paper Cronica, which attributes a high number of sources, and La Opinion, which does not.

If we look at the number of rejections/acceptances of wire agenda in Table 8, then we see that three newspapers hold agendas dissimilar to all four wire theme agendas (El Universal, Excelsior, and Crónica), whereas the other four newspapers reject only one wire's thematic agenda. Since on the scale of source diversity the top three ranks are the same as the top three in this rough measure of cultural independency, we may accept the hypothesis as confirmed. It does seem that the more sources are attributed in a newspaper, the more it will tend to print a thematic agenda dissimilar from those of the wires. Whether this reflects genuine cultural independence or sheer editorial perversity remains to be shown.

These few signs of cultural/news independence in Latin America should not blind us to the fact that most of the Latin American dailies probably take only AP or UPI, as Diaz Rangel points out, when he says that "an ideal daily in Latin America would that which would publish in its pages telegraphic information from UPI or AP, from one European agency such as Reuters or AFP (preferably the latter), and from one Latin American agency (Prensa Latina), and dispatches from some of its correspondents in some of the more important Latin American countries."[20] Anthony Smith has already noted a trend in some Latin American papers to use fresh sources of material and treat agency material less mechanically; this was also noticed by Reyes Matta, who singled out Excelsior in Mexico, O Estado de São Paulo in Brazil, El Nacional in Caracas and Clarín in Buenos Aires.[21]

Another ideal for the Latin American press system would be a genuine news agency for the whole region, since Cuba's Prensa Latina agency, though touted in some quarters, suffers from ideological predispositions. But this ideal is perennial and has been voiced since 1926, according to Jerry Knudson, most vocally be countries such as Bolivia and Cuba which have thrown off dependence on AP and UPI.[22] In any event, the mere presence of a diversity of sources would be unavailing, as Anthony Smith

points out, unless their news content was "intrinsically admired, or trusted, or needed."[23] Given the anti-imperialist climate in much of Latin America today, the only answer to this problem may well be a UN-funded regional news agency to compete with the existing news agencies, or at the very least some form of subsidies to Latin American papers so that they may subscribe to some of the lesser European agencies (EFE, ANSA, DPA) and Prensa Latina, which were significantly used by the two Mexican newspapers sampled in this study.

Endnotes

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18 Pierce, op.cit., p.43 et passim

19 Federacion Latinoamerica de Periodistas (FELAP), ed. Eleazar Diaz Rangel La Circulacion de Noticias en America Latina (Caracas: Imprenta Nacional, 1976), p.39 (article by Alberto Maldonado)

20 Diaz Rangel, Pueblos Subinformados, p.28

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22 Jerry Knudson "U.S. Coverage since 1952 of Bolivia: the unknown soldier of the Cold War", Gazette 3:185ff, 1977, p.192

23 Smith, op.cit., p.43